North East Salem Community Association (NESCA) Proposal for the Redevelopment of the North Campus of the Oregon State Hospital

At its December 17, 2013 meeting, the present membership of the North East Salem Community Association developed the following recommendations for the redevelopment of the North Campus. These recommendations were further refined at the membership’s November 2014 meeting.

Our recommendations are focused on maintaining the character and neighborhood scale of the area and supporting or increasing property values for current and prospective property owners, while supporting the conditions that will lead to a vibrant and successful redevelopment of the site.

NESCA’s Recommendations for the development of the site include the following:

1) **Provide a 3 to 5 acre or larger green space (public or private).** In “How cities Use Parks For Economic Development,” paper 3 of the City Parks Forum, a publication of the American Planning Association, green spaces are identified as key factor in maintaining and raising property values, and as critical for attracting the type residents identified in the Leland Report as potential residents. See http://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/economicdevelopment.htm.

The North Campus is currently enjoyed by a number of user groups, including neighbors and community sports teams for a variety of outdoor activities not easily accommodated in surrounding City parks. NESCA wishes to retain a portion of this vital community function as well as create a community attraction that will maintain and potentially increase the desirability of the neighborhood and that of any potential new development.

NESCA would prefer that the green space be located in the northwest corner of the lot, and the membership advises that there be public easements to the site and adequate public parking provided to serve the space.

2) **Retain the street trees around the entire North Campus site with an adequate green space to ensure their health.** A February 2010 study completed by the City of Portland and reported in the Oregonian states that mature street trees add between $7,000 and $13,000 to a home’s value and those of the surrounding residences. See http://www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2010/02/street_trees_increase_home_val.html . A green “buffer” around the property will also ensure that new development compliments the surrounding residential lots, most of which feature broad lawns and mature street trees, while retaining a marketable amenity for current and future residents.

NESCA’s membership understands that some trees may need to be removed for safety reasons. The membership asks that, when absolutely necessary, that diseased and damaged trees be replaced with an 8-10’ comparable specimen.

3) **Do not widen D and Park Streets and 23rd north of D, and minimize the impacts of through traffic.** Traffic through and around NESCA is already a well-known problem. Speed bumps were installed on Evergreen and 21st Streets in 2012, and ongoing issues persist on 23rd. Excessive traffic has had a documented and clearly evident visual impact on desirability and

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property values along D and Market Streets. Maintaining the neighborhood-scale of the streets will retain the essential characteristics of the neighborhood, making the area a desirable place to live.

4) **Scale development from less dense one- and two-story buildings along Park and D Streets to taller and higher density development toward Center and 23rd Streets.** Retaining the neighborhood scale of the area is key to maintaining the character of the neighborhood. Locating taller and denser development where it already exists will minimize the visual impacts on the surrounding one-story single-family homes. If included in the design, the members of NESCA ask that office and retail functions be concentrated along Center Street with access limited to this side of the property to minimize traffic impacts.

5) **Encourage Green Building.** Any new development should be built with the conservation of natural resources in mind. The neighborhood is supportive of innovative forward-looking construction that meets the highest LEED standards.

6) **Preserve the Historic Dome Building and associated west grounds.** Recognized as important in Salem’s history, the Dome building is a fitting compliment to the rehabilitated “J” Building across Center Street and is a significant historic landmark in the community. As noted in the Leland Report, this building can be economically rehabilitated and the west grounds will provide a key connecting green space between area parks, which is a goal of the City of Salem’s 2013 Parks Master Plan.

7) **Provide opportunities for neighborhood-based non-profits to locate on the site.** As reported in the November 25th edition of the Statesman Journal, the North and Northeast Salem area fall into the bottom fifth of neighborhoods across the nation when measuring median income and education. See [http://www.statesmanjournal.com/article/20131127/COMMUNITIES/311270051/Salem-shows-vast-income-gap](http://www.statesmanjournal.com/article/20131127/COMMUNITIES/311270051/Salem-shows-vast-income-gap). The needs of our community are great. NESCA asks that if the development should include office or retail space, that local non-profits and aid organizations serving the neighborhood be offered an opportunity to locate on the site with reduced rents.

8) **Create Compatible Successful Development.** The membership of NESCA is highly supportive of a campus use for the property, such as a university or other institution, but could also support a vibrant mix of market-rate housing with supportive uses. The location of an institution to this site would, in the opinion of the membership, create the least disturbance to the neighborhood. However, most acknowledge that a mix of housing and supportive functions, such as neighborhood commercial or office space, will compliment the neighborhood and provide useful services. No matter what is constructed, the membership favors development that will create jobs.
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December 2013

At its December 17, 2013 meeting, the present membership of the North East Salem Community Association developed the following recommendations for the redevelopment of the North Campus.

At this time, NESCA is actively engaging the State Legislature and the City to encourage collaboration in order to provide an attractive mix of real incentives to drive a creative and competitive process that will identify the right developer and plan for this challenging project and ensure its successful completion. Specifically, we are asking that the Legislature to:

1. Complete the local land use processes to the degree that the property is shovel ready for a developer, or provide adequate financial support to offset development costs.
2. Support the creation of a master plan for the site that incorporates substantive input from all stakeholders.
3. Sell the entire North Campus property to a single buyer to ensure that the development is guided by one vision under one set of regulations.
4. In the event that a purchaser is not identified, provide adequate funds to maintain the site as is until a suitable buyer can be found to prevent the property from becoming an attractive nuisance.
5. Condition the sale to provide for the retention of the street trees surrounding the site and provide for a three to five acre park space (public or private).

Our project-specific recommendations are focused on maintaining the character and neighborhood scale of the area and supporting or increasing property values for current and prospective property owners, while supporting the conditions that will lead to a vibrant and successful redevelopment of the site. We hope to see these recommendations included in the Request for Proposals to be issued by the Department of Administrative Services in Spring 2014.

NESCA’s Recommendations for the development of the site include the following:

1) **Provide a 3 to 5 acre park (public or private).** In “How cities Use Parks For Economic Development,” paper 3 of the City Parks Forum, a publication of the American Planning Association, parks are identified as key factor in maintaining and raising property values, and as critical for attracting the type residents identified in the Leland Report as potential residents. See [http://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/economicdevelopment.htm](http://www.planning.org/cityparks/briefingpapers/economicdevelopment.htm).

The North Campus is currently enjoyed by a number of user groups, including neighbors and community sports teams for a variety of outdoor activities not easily accommodated in surrounding City parks. NESCA wishes to retain a portion of this vital community function as well as create a community attraction that will maintain and potentially increase the desirability of the neighborhood and that of any potential new development.
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6) **Provide adequate utilities and services to the site and surrounding neighborhood.** Preferably, electric and telecommunications equipment would be located underground. Ensuring adequate utilities, sufficient public school capacity, and good access to public
transportation is necessary for the successful development of the neighborhood. As noted in the Leland Report, access to Transportation and services are primary attractions for potential residents and tenants at this site. Locating utilities underground will create a pleasant environment, and potentially eliminate or reduce the need to remove street trees.

7) **Encourage Green Building.** Any new development should be built with the conservation of natural resources in mind. The neighborhood is supportive of innovative forward-looking construction that meets the highest LEED standards.

8) **Preserve the Historic Dome Building and associated west grounds.** Recognized as important in Salem’s history, the Dome building is a fitting compliment to the rehabilitated “J” Building across Center Street and is a significant historic landmark in the community. As noted in the Leland Report, this building can be economically rehabilitated and the west grounds will provide a key connecting green space between area parks, which is a goal of the City of Salem’s 2013 Parks Master Plan.

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